

APPENDIX T

Building Tests to Support Instruction and Accountability: A Guide for Policymakers

October 2001

The National Commission on Instructionally Supportive Assessment

American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
National Education Association (NEA)
National Middle School Association (NMSA)

1. A state's content standards must be prioritized to support effective instruction and assessment.
2. A state's high-priority content standards must be clearly and thoroughly described so that the knowledge and skills students need to demonstrate competence are evident.
3. The results of a state's assessment of high-priority content standards should be reported standard-by-standard for each student, school, and district.
4. The state must provide educators with optional classroom assessment procedures that can measure students' progress in attaining content standards not assessed by state tests.
5. A state must monitor the breadth of the curriculum to ensure that instructional attention is given to all content standards and subject areas, including those that are not assessed by state tests.
6. A state must ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of state standards; consequently, it must provide well-designed assessments appropriate for a broad range of students, with accommodations and alternate methods of assessment available for students who need them.
7. A state must generally allow test developers a minimum of three years to produce statewide tests that satisfy *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* and similar test-quality guidelines.
8. A state must ensure that educators receive professional development focused on how to optimize children's learning based on the results of instructionally supportive assessments.
9. A state should secure evidence that supports the ongoing improvement of its state assessments to ensure those assessments are (a) appropriate for the accountability purposes for which they are used, (b) appropriate for determining whether students have attained state standards, (c) appropriate for enhancing instruction, and (d) not the cause of negative consequences.

Full report available upon request to State Board of Education Office in Olympia.